

ORDINANCE NO. 2007-04

AN ORDINANCE, establishing billing procedures for City utility accounts, amending WCC 9.02, 9.12.545, and 9.16.060, and repealing 9.12.360(1) and (2).

WHEREAS, the City operates utilities for water, sewer, storm drain and contracts for garbage disposal; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to establish a uniform policy pertaining to billing procedures for its utility and garbage disposal accounts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WENATCHEE, as follows:

SECTION I

Wenatchee City Code, Chapter 9.02, "Utility Charges," be and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

"9.02.010 Utility Billing.

1. The City of Wenatchee provides water, sewer, storm drain and contracts for garbage service. The City's Finance Department shall bill the City's customers for these services at rates established in WCC 9.12.540 (water); 4.08.035 (sewer); 9.16.060 (storm drain); and 4.36.160 (garbage), as they now exist, or as they may hereafter be amended. The Finance Department shall also collect the City utility tax as established in WCC 5.84.020.

2. Prior to receiving utility or garbage service, the owner of the property being serviced shall come into City Hall to sign in for service to insure accuracy of billing and identification of the responsible party. Faxed service order forms may be accepted if it is not possible for the owner to come to City Hall. Owners of the property may authorize their tenant to be responsible for the utility bills on single family residences or commercial businesses; no tenant will be allowed to sign in as a responsible party for multi-family units. An acceptable letter of credit, surety agreement, or a \$100 deposit is required at the time of sign

in or before service is provided. The deposit will be applied to the account of customers in good standing 12 months after the utility account was created.

3. The Finance Department will establish a cycle to bill commercial customers monthly and residential customers bi-monthly.

4. Customers applying for and meeting senior or disability requirements and meet the low income guidelines as established in RCW 84.36.381(5)(a) for two income households and RCW 84.36.381(5)(b)(ii) for single income households will be billed at senior low income rates.

9.02.020 Payment – Delinquency.

1. All payments for City utility charges are due and payable 30 days after the billing date. On the 31st day after the billing date, a late charge of 1.5% or \$5.00 per month, whichever amount is greater, will be applied against the entire past due balance. A late or disconnect notice will be mailed to the owner and tenant/occupant on the 35th day after the billing date.

2. Water service will be disconnected if no payment is received by the 45th day after the billing date. Service will be restored after the full amount due plus a disconnect/connect charge, as established in WCC 9.12.550, has been paid or acceptable payment arrangements have been made with finance department staff. Disconnect/connect fees may rarely be waived by the Finance Director or Accounting Supervisor if extenuating circumstances warrant such an action. If services are in the name of a landlord and are being delivered to a tenant, services will be reinstated without charge upon said tenant's agreement to be responsible for the services rendered from that point forward. If a customer makes a payment after 4:30 p.m., the water will not be reconnected until the next morning. If a customer wishes to have their water reconnected after 4:30 p.m., they will be charged two hours of overtime.

3. In the event any fees or charges assessed for these services are not paid within 90 days after mailing of the bill for such services, the customer will be sent a notice stating the balance due on the account and that if the balance is not paid directly to the City in 30 days it will be sent to a collection agency. If payment is not received within 20 days, another notice will be sent to the property owner notifying them that a lien will be filed with the County Auditor if payment is not received within 10 days. If no payment is received, the account shall be past due 120 days, and shall automatically constitute a lien against the property to which the services were rendered. Such lien shall encumber the property until the

same is paid in full. A processing fee equal to the amount charged by the Chelan County Auditor for recording the lien and a lien release will be added to the amount owed when the lien is filed.”

SECTION II.

Wenatchee City Code Sections 9.12.360(1) and (2) shall be and hereby are repealed in their entirety.

SECTION III.

Wenatchee City Code Section 9.12.545, “Senior Citizen Rates,” shall be and hereby is amended to read as follows:

“9.12.545 Senior Citizen – Disabled/Low Income Rates.

The rate for qualifying low income senior or disabled citizens shall be 50% of the domestic rates established in this Chapter. Provided, that to qualify for the above low income senior/disabled citizen rates, the principal resident shall submit an affidavit on a form to be provided by the City establishing qualifications by age/disability and income. The Finance Director is authorized and directed to forthwith prepare and promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of low income senior/disabled citizen rates considering this Chapter and applicable state law.”

SECTION IV.

Wenatchee City Code 9.16.060, “Service Charge Rates,” shall be and hereby is amended to add the following subsection:

“(5) The rate for qualifying low income senior or disabled citizens shall be 50% of the service charge rates established in this Chapter. Provided, that to qualify for the above low income senior/disabled citizen rates, the principal resident shall submit an affidavit on a form to be provided by the City establishing qualifications by age/disability and income. The Director of Finance is authorized and directed to forthwith prepare and promulgate rules and regulations for the implementation of low income senior/disabled citizen rates considering this chapter and applicable state law.”

SECTION V.


If any section, subsection, clause or sentence of this Ordinance shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance.

SECTION VI.

This Ordinance shall take effect from and after its passage thirty (30) days after publication as provided by law.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WENATCHEE, at a regular meeting thereof, this 8 day of March, 2007.

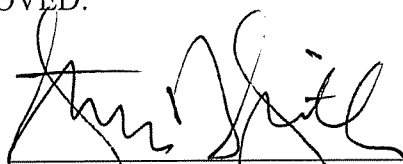
CITY OF WENATCHEE, a Municipal
Corporation

By: 
DENNIS JOHNSON, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: 
VICKI REISTER, City Clerk

APPROVED:

By: 
STEVE D. SMITH, City Attorney